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Monday, 6 December 1993
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

In the absence of the President, Mr. Ansari (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 31 ***(continued)***

THE SITUATION OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI

(a) NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/532 and Add.1 and 2)

(b) DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.35/Rev.1)

The PRESIDENT: This morning the General Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 31, entitled "The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti". Members will recall that the Assembly held its debate on agenda item 31 at its 69th meeting, on 3 December.

I now call on the representative of Ecuador.

Mr. PONCE (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the States members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, my delegation wishes to introduce an oral revision to draft resolution A/48/L.35/Rev.1.

We wish to replace the fourteenth preambular paragraph by the following:

(spoke in English)

"Taking note of President Aristide's proposals for a solution to the crisis in Haiti presented before the General Assembly".

(spoke in Spanish)

We trust that the General Assembly will accept this change and that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/48/L.35/Rev.1, as orally revised by the representative of Ecuador.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution A/48/L.35/Rev.1, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/48/L.35/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 48/27).

The PRESIDENT: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 31.

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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ENGLISH

AGENDA ITEM 18

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

(a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (A/48/23, A/AC.109/1137-1139, 1141-1158, 1161-1164 and 1170)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/48/426)

(c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/48/L.38, A/48/L.39)

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now consider the question of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, as a whole, under agenda item 18.

I now call on the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Mr. Farouk Al-Attar of the Syrian Arab Republic, to introduce the Committee's report.

Mr. AL-ATTAR (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: As Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I have the honour to present to the General Assembly for its consideration the report of the Special Committee covering its work during 1993, which is contained in document A/48/23.

The report, which relates, *inter alia*, to item 18 of the agenda, is submitted in accordance with paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 47/23 of 25 November 1992 on the implementation of the Declaration, by which the Assembly requested the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the General Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in all Territories that had not yet attained independence and, in particular, to formulate specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism.

At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly, by adopting resolution 46/181, entitled "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism", and the Plan of Action, mandated the Special Committee to undertake a series of activities during the Decade, including, among other activities, to organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, alternately.

During the year, the Special Committee was able to discharge the tasks thus entrusted to it by the Assembly and to submit appropriate recommendations on all the items referred to it for consideration and report, by meeting between February and August and by holding extensive consultations throughout the year among its members.

In accordance with the provisions of resolution 46/181 and the Plan of Action, the Special committee held a regional seminar at Papua New Guinea in June. The report of the regional seminar contains the views expressed by those representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories who attended the seminar. The report also contains a summary of discussions held which highlight the main issues raised and the views expressed by the participants at the seminar. The report of the regional seminar is contained in document A/AC.109/1159, and its consideration by the Special Committee is contained in chapter II of its report (A/48/23).

Bearing in mind in particular the specific requests addressed to it by the General Assembly in resolution 47/23, the Special Committee reviewed, during the year, the implementation of the Declaration relating to the remaining Territories and formulated a series of recommendations with a view to enhancing the pace of decolonization and to facilitating the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples in those Territories.

In addition, the Special Committee submitted recommendations specifically relating to activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration; military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration; the implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations; and information transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter.

During the year, the Special Committee devoted considerable attention to the decolonization of small island Territories. In that connection, the Special Committee was especially mindful of the fact that United Nations visiting missions had provided effective means of assessing and ascertaining the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of those small Territories regarding their future status.

Accordingly, it once again stressed the importance of dispatching such missions to colonial Territories in order to facilitate the implementation of the Declaration. The Government of New Zealand, the administering Power of Tokelau, has extended an invitation to the Committee to send a further visiting mission to Tokelau. The Committee has accepted that invitation and envisages sending a visiting mission to that Territory early in 1994. The Committee will continue to seek the full cooperation of the other administering Powers with respect to sending visiting missions to Territories under their administration.

On the question of publicity for the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization, the Committee again reiterated, in chapter III of its report (A/48/23), the importance of ensuring the widest possible dissemination of information on decolonization as an instrument for furthering the purposes and principles of the Charter and the aims of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and for mobilizing world public opinion in support of the peoples of colonial Territories in their efforts to achieve self-determination, freedom and independence.

Bearing in mind the important role being played by non-governmental organizations in the decolonization process and in the dissemination of information on the situation in all the remaining small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, the Special Committee requested the departments concerned to continue their cooperation with those organizations in the dissemination of information on decolonization issues and in the provision of support to the peoples of those Territories.

During the year, in the light of the constructive results achieved and in keeping with related decisions of the Assembly, the Committee decided to continue to maintain close contact with the organizations concerned and to participate in the related conferences arranged by those organizations and by other United Nations bodies. The objective of those contacts was to facilitate the effective implementation of the decisions of the various United Nations bodies and to foster cooperation between the specialized agencies and regional organizations in their assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

I should like to draw the attention of members to the proposals outlined in section J of chapter I, entitled "Future work", which, the Committee hopes, will meet with the Assembly's approval so that the Committee can proceed with the effective discharge of the task that remains to be completed.

The Special Committee recommended that the General Assembly renew its appeal to the administering Powers concerned to take all necessary steps for the implementation of the Declaration and the relevant United Nations resolutions, in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In that connection, the Special Committee, bearing in mind the useful results achieved as a consequence of the active participation of the administering Powers in its work, recommended that the General Assembly again urge the administering Powers to cooperate, or continue to cooperate, with the Committee in the discharge of its mandate and, in particular, to participate actively in its work relating to the Territories under their respective administration.

The General Assembly may also wish to renew its appeal to all States, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system to comply with the various requests addressed to them by the United Nations in its resolutions on the question of decolonization.

On behalf of the Committee, I commend the report to the attention of the General Assembly.

Before concluding, permit me to express to all the members of the Special Committee and, in particular, to Ambassador Renagi Renagi Lohia of Papua New Guinea, Chairman of the Committee; Ambassador Alcibiades Hidalgo Basulto of Cuba, Mr. Andrew G. Bangali of Sierra Leone, and Mr. Alexander Slaby of the Czech Republic, the three Vice-Chairmen; Ambassador Amor Ardhaoui of Tunisia, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance, and Mr. Hossein Lotfi Hormozabadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Rapporteur of that Subcommittee, my deep gratitude for the cooperation and support I have received from them, which has greatly facilitated my task as Rapporteur.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Chairman of the Special Committee, Mr. Renagi Renagi Lohia of Papua New Guinea, who will introduce draft resolutions A/48/L.38 and A/48/L.39 in the course of his statement.

Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea): As Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, also known as the Committee on Decolonization, it is my honour to address the Assembly on agenda item 18.

All members are acutely aware of the importance of the Special Committee on Decolonization, which has been instrumental in bringing about the wide and nearly universal membership of the United Nations. The decolonization process gathered momentum following the

adoption of the historic Declaration on 14 December 1960, and its aftermath has left an indelible imprint on international relations.

The mandate entrusted to the Special Committee on Decolonization since its establishment in 1961 is very clear: to monitor the political, economic and social conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to report to the General Assembly on progress achieved in the implementation of the historic resolution 1514 (XV), adopted in 1960. The Committee has, since its inception, carried out its mandate faithfully.

Over the years the Special Committee has patiently and methodically pursued its task of reviewing the political, economical and social conditions in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, hearing petitioners, sending visiting missions to Territories, disseminating information on decolonization with a view to mobilizing public opinion and reporting to the General Assembly and the Security Council, as appropriate.

While adhering to its mandate the Special Committee has continued to keep its approach and method of work under constant review in order to adjust to changing circumstances and to improve its efficiency. That continuing process has gained renewed impetus since 1990 owing to the positive developments that have occurred in international relations since the end of the cold war.

Times have changed since the Special Committee on decolonization began its work in 1962. The majority of the Territories under its purview have since exercised their right to self-determination and independence and taken their rightful seats in the Assembly. However, 18 Territories still remain on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. These Territories are for the most part small island Territories in the Pacific and Caribbean regions characterized by small or sparse populations and limited resources.

As members are aware, the General Assembly has set the goal of complete decolonization by the year 2000 and declared the period 1990-2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. While the Assembly has repeatedly reaffirmed that factors such as area, size of population or geographic location should not prevent the peoples of those Territories from exercising freely their right to self-determination and independence, the Special Committee does not lose sight of the fact that complete decolonization by the year 2000 would require innovative and realistic solutions.

For these reasons the Special Committee on Decolonization has over the past three years concentrated its efforts on a new approach to decolonization issues while adhering firmly to the relevant principles of the Charter and the resolutions of the General Assembly.

Those who have followed the Committee's work in recent years will have noted, I am sure, the particular attention that the Committee has devoted to the specific needs of each Territory by using all available sources of information, the most authoritative being, of course, the views of the territorial Governments and peoples concerned. The Committee has systematically encouraged the participation of the local Governments of the Territories, as well as the representatives of the peoples of those Territories, in its work and in that regard has adopted constructive measures to facilitate their presence. We deem it equally important that they establish regular contacts with the United Nations, thereby ensuring that the international community is made aware of their views and aspirations concerning the future of their Territories. The Special Committee has always emphasized that the wishes of the peoples of the Territory are paramount in determining their future status.

Indeed, in addition to meeting with the Special Committee during the year, some representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories have availed themselves of the opportunity to address the Fourth Committee. Representatives of the local Governments of Guam and Gibraltar made statements to the Fourth Committee at this session and petitioners from New Caledonia and the United States Virgin Islands also addressed the Committee to provide further information on conditions in their respective Territories.

In their dealings with the Special Committee on decolonization and during the course of regional seminars, several leaders of territorial Governments have clearly indicated that an acceleration of the economic and social development of their Territories would facilitate the exercise of their right to self-determination and independence. In response to these concerns the Special Committee has systematically concentrated its efforts, within the context of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, on the search for specific measures that would promote the development of these Territories. To that end the Special Committee continues to seek the cooperation of the Administering Authorities and has urged the specialized agencies of the United Nations system to extend all possible assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Special Committee has initiated consultations with regional groups and organizations and invited them to increase their assistance to those Territories within a

regional context and to facilitate their integration into their respective regions.

On behalf of the Special Committee and at its behest I have stressed to the administering Powers of the Non-Self-Governing Territories the importance that we attach to their cooperation in our efforts. The Special Committee continues to believe that the administering Powers have primary responsibility for the Territories and that their cooperation is of the utmost importance for the completion of the decolonization process. The Special Committee has continued to request the administering Powers to provide the United Nations with up-to-date information on the economic, social, cultural and political conditions in each Territory in accordance with their obligations under Article 73 *e* of the Charter.

In meeting the challenges to ensure the decolonization of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories and to obtain information on the political, economic and social conditions in the Territories the Special Committee organizes regional seminars each year under the Plan of Action for the International Decade, to which it invites representatives of the Governments of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Those seminars have provided the best opportunity to focus regional attention on the specific needs of the remaining Territories. This year was no exception. The report of the regional seminar held in June 1993 at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, provides ample information about the scope and the very fruitful exchange of views the Special Committee had with representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories and various regional organizations. Our discussions focused on how best to assist the Territories and to promote the exercise by their peoples of their right to self-determination. In this respect very important proposals and recommendations were made that the Special Committee intends to take into account in its search for innovative solutions.

The Special Committee places particular importance on visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories as a means of eliciting first-hand information on the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of the Territories. Earlier this year the Special Committee accepted with pleasure the invitation addressed to it by New Zealand to visit Tokelau, a Territory under its administration. We have no doubt that the forthcoming visit will assist the Special Committee by furthering its knowledge of the specific conditions in the Territory, thereby contributing significantly to the decolonization process as a whole.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Special Committee and on my own behalf - in my capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee and as a representative from that region - to reiterate our appreciation to the Government of New Zealand for its continued and exemplary cooperation with the Special Committee of 24. May I recall, indeed, that the forthcoming visiting mission will be the fourth to that Territory. We continue to hope that other administering Powers will come forward with similar invitations to visit Territories under their Administration.

As I stated earlier, we live in a world of rapid change. Developments on the international scene are occurring at an accelerated pace to the point that some decisions made at the beginning of this session may become obsolete or out of date in a few months. The Special Committee has proved that it can adjust to the momentous changes facing the international community and that it will continue to do so.

It is in the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories that the Committee has taken up the challenge to bring new and innovative approaches to its work. In this noble endeavour, and in the search for solutions, we look to all Member States to lend moral support, or more tangible assistance, to the Special Committee on decolonization as it strives to bring an end to colonialism by the close of this millennium.

So long as there are Non-Self-Governing Territories falling within the purview of the Charter of the United Nations, the work of the Organization in this field must continue unabated. All necessary resources must be allocated to this important sector until the Special Committee has indeed secured effective implementation of the General Assembly's mandates on decolonization.

In conclusion, I should like, as Chairman of the Special Committee, to pay a particular tribute to the efforts of my colleagues on the Committee and to express my appreciation to them - particularly the Vice-Chairmen, the Rapporteur and the other officers - for their devotion and assistance in the discharge of our mandate. I should like also to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his continued interest in the work of the Special Committee, and, through him, to pay a tribute to the staff of the Secretariat for their constant cooperation and support throughout the year.

Finally, having briefly reviewed some of the principal developments in the field of decolonization, and in keeping with long-established practice, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the following sponsors - Fiji, Grenada, the Federated States of Micronesia, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe - the draft

resolution contained in document A/48/L.38. I wish also to introduce on behalf of the following sponsors - Fiji, Grenada, Madagascar, the Federated States of Micronesia, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe - the draft resolution contained in document A/48/L.39. As these draft resolutions reflect both the developments and the problems that I have just outlined, I need not elaborate on their substance.

Draft resolution A/48/L.38 deals with general aspects of decolonization. By this draft resolution the Assembly would, among other things, renew the mandate of the Special Committee and approve its programme of work for 1994.

Draft resolution A/48/L.39 concerns dissemination of information on decolonization. By this draft resolution the Assembly would again stress the importance of publicity as an instrument for furthering the aims and purposes of the Charter and the Declaration. In this connection, the role played by the Secretary-General, through all the media at his disposal, cannot be overemphasized.

On behalf of the sponsors, I commend these draft resolutions to the members of the General Assembly for their serious attention and, I hope, their unanimous approval.

Mr. BANGALI (Sierra Leone): It gives me pleasure to participate, on behalf of the delegation of Sierra Leone, in the debate on agenda item 18, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

I should like, at the outset, to express support for, and to endorse, the statement just made by the Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea in his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, of which my country is honoured to be one of the three Vice-Chairmen.

The world has witnessed in the past couple of years tremendous social and political changes, resulting in the demise of the cold war and an end to East-West tensions. Consequently, there has emerged a new-found spirit of cooperation, understanding and entente between nations, which, in the view of my delegation, should now be translated into concrete and positive measures - in particular, measures taken by the administering Powers - with respect to the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence by the remaining 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories under the administration of those Powers.

We acknowledge that the complexities of situations are diverse, but we regard as self-serving the argument that some of the 18 Territories are too small to be viable as independent States. Many small countries that were so characterized before independence are today playing meaningful and constructive roles, both at the United Nations and in the international community at large. We therefore believe that, however small in size and population, and no matter how limited the resources at their disposal, the Non-Self-Governing Territories should be given the opportunity to decide their fate - that is, whether or not they want to be granted independence and self-determination.

We are of the view that no conditions or limitations should be placed on the right of peoples to self-determination and independence. Thus, we wish to reiterate our delegation's support for the declaration in the Final Documents of the Tenth Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, which took place in Jakarta in September last year. That declaration reaffirms the right of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), regardless of their territories' size, geographic location, population or limitation of resources.

My delegation is pleased to commend the activities of the Special Committee on decolonization - especially the role it has played over the years in the just cause of independence and self-determination for many colonial countries and peoples. Indeed, the Committee of 24 - as it is commonly called - can take pride in its achievements, particularly with respect to the granting of independence to Namibia and the impending dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, of which it has been seized for a very long time.

The Committee of 24 has also undertaken innovative measures following its review of its approach to, as well as its methodology of work, not only for the purpose of enhancing its efficiency but - in the words of the Chairman - to

> "adjust to changing circumstances ... owing to the positive developments that have occurred in international relations since the end of the cold war." *(supra., p. 4)*

It has engaged in consultations with regional groups and organizations with regard to assistance to the Territories in their regions. The language in its draft resolutions has

been amended to reflect the reality of the present situation. Those draft resolutions are no longer couched in what was once described as the "tired, disobliging rhetoric of previous decades".

Those are just some of the many compelling reasons for allowing the Committee of 24 to continue its work and for providing it with adequate resources to carry out its mandate. The Committee's work is far from finished, and will remain so until and unless the goals that were set in 1960 in resolution 1514 (XV) are fully attained. We express the hope that the remaining years of the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism will usher in a new era - an era devoid of all manifestations of colonialism.

Let me now make a few comments on the dissemination of information on decolonization.

The regional seminar on decolonization held at Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in June this year afforded those of us who participated in it an opportunity for a useful exchange of views between representatives of the Committee of 24, Non-Self-Governing Territories, regional organizations, and others. In the view of my delegation - a view supported by several statements made at the seminar by representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Pacific - what emerged from those discussions was, *inter alia*, that there is a paucity of information to and from those Territories regarding the economic, social, cultural and political conditions in each Territory. It was evident that the performance of the two United Nations information centres in that region left a lot to be desired. There is therefore an urgent need to revamp those centres in order to improve their performance. Additional centres should be opened to cover what is clearly a vast region, and there should be an adequate infusion of financial resources into those centres to facilitate the collection and dissemination of useful information to and from those widely dispersed Territories.

My delegation wishes in conclusion to stress the need to rejuvenate United Nations visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories. These provide an effective means of obtaining information on developments and ascertaining the situation in the Territories and the views of their peoples with regard to their future status. We cannot overemphasize the need for administering Powers to cooperate, or continue to cooperate, by facilitating the dispatch of such missions to the Territories under their administration. We commend the Government of New Zealand for agreeing to the forthcoming visiting mission to Tokelau, and we appeal to the other administering Powers to emulate that good example. We also call for their cooperation and participation in the decolonization process, without which the efforts of the Committee of 24 will bear little or no dividend.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in 1995, will no doubt provide a unique opportunity to carry out a mid-term review of the plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, considering the success of decolonization activities of the United Nations over the years. Let us not allow ourselves to fall prey to complacency following the changes that have taken place in the world. The momentum must be maintained.

Mr. KAMAT (India): My delegation is privileged to participate in the debate today on the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As a member of the Special Committee, India has always fully associated itself with the Committee's important and arduous work towards the elimination of colonialism. The decrease in the number of Non-Self-Governing Territories from 64 in 1961, when the Committee was established, to 18 in 1992 is clearly indicative of the universal support of the international community for decolonization and for the work of the Special Committee. In this Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, we rededicate ourselves to our goal to make the world free from colonialism in the twenty-first century.

The end of the cold war presents the United Nations and the world community with a historic opportunity to shape the destiny of the world and bring to fruition the mission it undertook several decades ago. In its deliberations, the Special Committee has taken into account these recent developments and has endeavoured to work in a constructive way, with political pragmatism and flexibility, in the pursuit of the noble goal of decolonization.

The second half of the century has been witness to the independence of a large number of those countries which were previously under colonial rule. India achieved its own independence in 1947. The principles of non-violence and respect for individuals constituted the cornerstone of the Indian independence movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and inspired the Indian people to undergo great sacrifices in the cause of their freedom from colonial rule. These principles have now become the very foundation of Indian society. As a founder-Member of the United Nations and as a sponsor of the historic 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, India has unremittingly striven for the basic rights and human dignity of those who similarly

yearned for their own freedom. Jawaharlal Nehru, in a speech before the United Nations, said:

> "It is an astonishing thing that any country should still venture to hold and to set forth this doctrine of colonialism, whether it is under direct rule or whether it is indirectly maintained in some form or other. Any Power, great or small, which in that way prevents the attainment of the freedom of those peoples does an ill turn to world peace".

We have always cherished the values of essential humaneness, of the coexistence of progress and freedom and of world peace, as the common values which are shared by the entire world community. We are also convinced that national independence and sovereignty remain the most important attributes for establishing international cooperation in all areas on a firm foundation.

The wave of democratization, respect for basic human rights and dignity, political freedom and the overwhelming desire for equal economic opportunity is sweeping the globe. The trust imposed on us by the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on decolonization has been very nearly vindicated. The end of the cold-war antagonisms provides us with a fresh opportunity to bring our mission to fruition. The remaining tasks - admittedly a small number - are indeed complex.

The last decade of this century has been declared by the General Assembly as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. This underlines the need for increased vigour and determination. A plan of action for the Decade has been proposed by the Secretary-General. The new-found spirit of cooperation and political realism, understanding and flexibility should guide the international community towards the successful implementation of that plan. All of us, administering Powers and others alike, have an equal responsibility in this task. It must be accomplished freely and with transparency - which are the present day watch-words for the conduct of international relations. These efforts must remain at the core of our action.

Some of the issues on our agenda are nearing resolution, and others are being tackled in a successful manner. In South Africa, agreements have been reached within the framework of the multi-party negotiations on the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council, the independent electoral and media commissions and the independent broadcasting authority. There have also been agreements on the constitution for the transitional period and on the electoral bill. It has been agreed that the first non-racial elections for an interim government will be held on 27 April 1994. Those elections, which we trust will be conducted in a free and fair manner, will make irreversible the process of transition to a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. For the first time in modern history, the South African people will be able to exercise their right to elect a government without discrimination on grounds of sex, religion or race. It is to be hoped that the end of economic sanctions against South Africa, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/1, will assist the South African people in their quest for the desired economic stability and progress in post-apartheid South Africa.

While the progress on a referendum in Western Sahara has been slow during the last year, the spirit of cooperation and understanding between the two parties, and the commencement of direct talks between them, constitute a positive development that provides optimism to the international community. This process needs to be nurtured and carried further with the support of the involved parties. My delegation expresses its full support for the efforts being made by the Secretary-General in this regard.

In other parts of the world, in the Malvinas and in New Caledonia, we are encouraged by the ongoing dialogue between the parties concerned. We encourage the parties, in a spirit of cooperation, to build upon the understandings which have been already reached.

Most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories on the agenda of the Special Committee are small island Territories in the Pacific and Caribbean. The complexities of each situation are clearly known to Member States. It is also evident that the inherent right of each of these Territories to decide its own political future enjoys wide international support. It is for the people of these Territories to choose the kind of political system they desire for their own governance. The right of the people of these Territories freely to express their political will is also unquestionable. A heavy responsibility lies on the administering Power to protect the vulnerable economies and ecologies of these islands while continuing to provide the people the opportunity to determine freely what they perceive to be in their best interests. The Special Committee on decolonization has the responsibility of supporting the just interests of these Territories. We are confident that the administering Powers and the Special Committee will work jointly towards this end.

We are nearing the end of a difficult journey the world undertook in the post-Second World War era. The last few steps are often the most difficult. It becomes all the more crucial for all of us to remain unwavering in our support for the eradication of the last vestiges of colonialism, which continues to be a challenge to the entire international community.

Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania): As we advance towards the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, it should be a matter of concern to all of us that the efforts to achieve that objective seem to be slackening. The small number of delegations which have sought to participate in this debate is one indication of that slackening. It is part of the widely shared perception that the struggle against colonialism has been won and that the international community would do well to direct its attention elsewhere.

My delegation therefore welcomes the present debate as an opportunity to remind ourselves that there are still some 18 Territories on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories covered by the mandate of the Special Committee on decolonization. The people of every one of these Territories are every bit as entitled to the right to self-determination as have been all colonial peoples throughout the period of decolonization. It does not matter that the majority of the Territories are small islands with small populations. The right of peoples to self-determination cannot be denied on the grounds of the size of their populations or their territories.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that since the debate on this item last year further progress has been made towards closing the colonial chapter in Africa. The agreement between South Africa and Namibia that Walvis Bay and the offshore islands will revert to Namibia in February 1994 is a most gratifying development, and we congratulate the parties on this breakthrough. In particular, we congratulate the representatives of the majority people of South Africa on the position they adopted at the multi-party negotiations which made this historic agreement possible.

In regard to the situation in South Africa itself, the majority people of South Africa must be commended for the progress they have made towards throwing off the yoke of oppression and realizing their aspirations. Foremost among these aspirations is their inalienable right to self-determination. That is why there is so much excitement - and not just in South Africa - about the first democratic elections, scheduled to take place in South Africa on 27 April next year. Until the people of South Africa have been enabled to exercise their right to self-determination, the Special Committee on decolonization will continue to have an interest in what is happening in that unhappy land. While it is conceded that classical colonialism is not the problem in South Africa, the determining common feature of both the South Africa situation and classical colonialism is the denial of the right to self-determination. The Special Committee therefore has not just a right but a responsibility to assist in the efforts to eradicate apartheid.

Regrettably, Western Sahara, the only remaining Territory on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories on the African continent, remains to be decolonized. We regret that recent attempts to get the two parties to the conflict to agree on the implementation of the peace plan made no headway. Clearly, there is a need for greater efforts to be made by everybody concerned to get the peace process to move again. Good faith is essential for the process to start moving again and all those with any influence on the POLISARIO Front and the Government of Morocco must use it to encourage good faith negotiations.

We are now three years into the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. My delegation commends the Special Committee on decolonization for the efforts it has made and continues to make to implement the plan of action for the Decade. In particular, we congratulate the Special Committee on the success of the seminars organized so far.

The importance of these seminars in the vital process of raising the awareness of peoples in colonial Territories about their right to self-determination and about the obligations and responsibilities of the Administering Authorities, the United Nations and the wider international community to assist towards its realization cannot be sufficiently stressed. For people can make the right choices only if they have all the relevant information before them. General Assembly resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, which endorsed the Decade's plan of action, urges the participation in the seminars not just of the colonial peoples themselves, but also of their elected representative, Administering Authorities, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts. By bringing together all these players, the seminars can contribute enormously towards the harmonization of action and thus facilitate the rapid implementation of the plan of action.

The Special Committee has always placed a premium on the participation of the Administering Authorities in the Committee's work. This is right, because the fulfilment of its mandate would be difficult without the cooperation of the Administering Authorities. My delegation commends those Administering Authorities which have continued to extend their cooperation to the Committee by honouring their obligations under Article 73 *e* of the United Nations Charter and by accepting United Nations visiting missions. The Government of New Zealand has been particularly forthcoming in extending cooperation to the Committee, and my delegation would like to register its appreciation of this cooperation.

Regular United Nations visiting missions are a time-honoured method of enabling the United Nations to obtain first-hand information on colonial Territories and to ascertain the wishes of the people. It is a matter of regret that, despite the Committee's appeal and readiness to cooperate, some Administering Authorities have still not seen their way to accepting United Nations visiting missions into the Territories they control.

My final comments relate to the continuing efforts to streamline and adapt the work of the Committee on decolonization to the changed and changing international situation. The Tanzanian delegation has participated actively in the work of the Open-ended Working Group established by the Committee for this purpose, and is pleased with the further consolidation of the work of the Committee achieved in the course of the past year. We shall continue to participate constructively in the Committee's future efforts in this direction.

However, the Tanzanian delegation trusts that no attempt will be made to marginalize the work of the Committee or to divert it from its mandate, including, in particular, the priority which our Organization has always accorded to the process of decolonization. We also strongly believe that it would be unacceptable to reinterpret the right of peoples of self-determination in ways that conflict with the provisions of the Charter and of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

It goes without saying that, as a member of the Special Committee on decolonization, my delegation fully supports draft resolutions A/48/L.38 and A/48/L.39. We urge the Assembly to adopt them by consensus.

Mr. PURSOO (Grenada): The sight of 184 national flags fluttering in the breeze at the Headquarters of the United Nations symbolizes one of the greatest achievements of this Organization.

The historic 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is fundamental to the success of the decolonization process that is reflected in the increased number of flags adorning the entrance to the Assembly. That process has in turn contributed significantly to the transformation of the political map of our planet Earth.

Since decolonization has always been one of the central endeavours of the United Nations, the pride which its Members share in this area of achievement is quite understandable. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the success achieved in this field has brought immense satisfaction to millions of people worldwide over the past three decades. This should not, however, lull us into complacency as to the specific needs of those peoples that have yet to exercise their right to self-determination as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations. It was out of this concern that the General Assembly in 1988 proclaimed the decade of the 1990s to be the United Nations International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that the work of dealing with the issue of Non-Self-Governing Territories must now be in many cases substantially different from what it was in the past. Discussions held at the Grenada seminar on decolonization in June 1992 and again in Papua New Guinea in June of this year substantiated this conclusion. It is therefore encouraging to note the increased flexibility that now characterizes the work of the Special Committee as it discharges its duties within the guidelines of the United Nations Charter and in the interest of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Special Committee of 24, the Fourth Committee and all other United Nations groups which have an impact on the decolonization process are just as important today as they ever were. At the same time, participation by the administering Powers in the work of the Special Committee remains crucial. While that cooperation would greatly enhance the work of the Committee, it is the aspirations of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories that stand to benefit most from the goodwill, imagination and creativity now required to address the circumstances that give the decolonization process its unique characteristics at this time in history.

The recent decolonization seminars conducted in the Pacific and the Caribbean by the Special Committee of 24 underscored the need for visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories to allow for more informed communication, which ultimately will benefit the peoples of those Territories. It is regrettable that at a time often referred to as the era of the information revolution, the Special Committee must rely on outdated and sometimes secondhand information *vis-à-vis* conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories on which to base its reports.

As late as June 1993, at the Papua New Guinea decolonization seminar and before that in Grenada, members of the Special Committee heard impassioned pleas from the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories on the need to expand dissemination of information globally, regionally and particularly from the United Nations to facilitate the development of their understanding of the related processes affecting their lives and to make possible more informed decision-making in this regard.

At this critical time in the decolonization process, the Special Committee needs all the cooperation necessary to fulfil its mandate, and the high priority which the General Assembly has historically accorded to decolonization needs to be sustained now more than ever.

The PRESIDENT: Action on draft resolutions A/48/L.38 and A/48/L.39 will be taken on Friday, 10 December, in the afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.